

BOB DAYTON'S MINE.

The familiar sight of two young asses, or "Jacks," as the miners call them, loaded with mining tools and provisions, and driven along by two miners who walked behind them, would have attracted but little attention among the loungers in front of the Grand hotel at Cedar Gulch, had it not been for two or three peculiar circumstances which "Colonel" Brown proceeded to narrate to the bystanders.

Since coming to Colorado, three years before, the colonel had succeeded, without any visible means of support, in maintaining an existence as free from toil as that of the lilies, and by his abundant leisure, his skillful disposal of tobacco juice and his success at the faro table, had fairly won his title. The talker and his audience leaned against the rough logs of the one-storied Grand hotel. Aiming a brownish flood at a dusty stone some feet away, the colonel began:

"Queer pards, those. There's Bob Dayton—he ain't much more than a tenderfoot, but he's a white man right through. But as for Sandy Joe, I wouldn't trust him as far as I could see. If he didn't jump that claim of Cap. Perry's last spring, I'm a nigger. How Dayton ever happened to strike in with Joe I can't see, except that Bob's rather fresh in this country. You ought to have heard him tell me last night in confidence all about his girl in Ohio. Lizzie, I think, he called her. He was poor, and she was poor; and he didn't see much hope of getting married unless they wanted to live on a little less than nothing. So he came out here to find his fortune. Hope he'll get it. He deserves to, anyway, going out prospecting on the mountains in Colorado in October. Like as not there may be three feet of snow on the mountains to-morrow. Joe ought to know better, at any rate; but he's reckless enough to do anything. By the way, Bill, what about that roan horse that Powers lost upon Mount Shavano. Hasn't found it yet, eh? He'd better be looking around lively if he expects to get it down before the snow comes."

And then the conversation of the group in front of the hotel at Cedar Gulch drifted off on to other topics, while the two men of whom the colonel had spoken proceeded on up the gulch, and turning to the right, struck the trail leading up the sides of Mount Shavano.

A great contrast was apparent in the looks and manners of the two men working together in the close companionship which is implied in mining regions by the term "partners."

Robert Dayton was a tall, fair-haired young man, with a frank, open countenance, that made him friends even among the rough class of men among whom his lot was cast in a Colorado mining camp. He had been well educated by a father who left him only his education as an inheritance. He had become engaged to a pretty and rich girl, but her father lost in a grain speculation most of the wealth that he had acquired, and Robert was unwilling to urge her to a speedy marriage unless he could provide for her a home with at least some of the comforts to which she had been accustomed. Accordingly, he had sought the silver lands of the west, in the hope of there obtaining more speedily sufficient means to justify him in making her whom he loved his own. But his sanguine expectations had been disappointed, and for several months he had wandered from one mining camp to another, till at last he arrived at Cedar Gulch, weary and almost disheartened. He was just in the mood to listen to a reckless proposal which he heard made in the hotel one day by Sandy Joe, to go on a prospecting tour in spite of the near approach of snow. Robert did not know, and did not care much, who his partner was, if he could have another chance to labor for the treasure which he was seeking. No one knew the real name of Sandy Joe, as he was called, with the frequent inappropriateness of Western nicknames. He was a short, dark-complexioned and dark-haired man, with an unenviable notoriety for quarrelsomeness. This ill-assorted couple proceeded on their expedition without much incident for the first day, driving their "Jacks" up the stony trail toward the summit of Mount Shavano, that towers high above the surrounding mountains.

On the second day of their journey, when they had not yet reached the place where they were to leave their "Jacks" and proceed on foot, there came down over the travelers a heavy mist, not uncommon on the mountains and soon after the snow began to fall, very lightly at first, and then more heavily. The trail, which had not been very distinct before, began to be almost hidden from view. But the sagacious animals seemed by some instinct to pick out the true path, and the journey was still slowly continued. One of the animals, however, wandered

a little from the path in the afternoon, and stepping on a loose rock near the edge of a steep ravine, slipped and rolled over and over down the bank, and was seen no more. A hearty curse from the lips of Sandy Joe greeted this mishap, but the journey was continued. The path began to grow steeper, and as the snow began to be piled up before the travelers it became almost impossible to go on. Joe, who was good tempered enough when everything went well, began now to howl signs of increasing ill-temper. He cursed and swore at the storm and snow, and then would subside into moody silence. He beat with merciless blows the heavily laden "Jack" that struggled along on its hard journey. It became evident at length that the men could not reach the camp to which they were bound by walking, and the animal was unloaded, and it was decided that the men should take turns in riding till their destination was reached. But five or six miles now lay between the men and the cluster of cabins where they hoped to find aid, but the darkness was already coming on, and the way was getting impassable.

Joe insisted upon taking the first turn in riding, and Dayton allowed him to mount. In this way about a mile was passed over, when Dayton, almost overcome by fatigue, called upon his companion to dismount and exchange places. The way at that point was narrow and led alongside of a steep incline on the mountain side. Joe, who was riding ahead, stopped when he heard his companion call, and allowed Dayton to come close up to him, as if to allow him to take the animal. Then suddenly bending over, Joe drew from his belt a long knife and plunged it into his partner's breast.

"Here," said he, "as we can't both get through to the camp, I won't be the one that's left behind;" and then giving poor Bob a push over the edge of the bank, the assassin rode on.

The wounded man rolled down the stony side of the mountain, the kindly snow shielding his body from some of the sharp boulders, till the gradual declivity down which he was precipitated changed to a steep precipice, over the edge of which he plunged onto a level surface several feet below. Stunned as he was by his wound and fall, he was still able, on looking around him, to see in the side of the precipice a large opening like the entrance of a cave, and with the instinct of self-preservation, he dragged himself thither, and succeeded in reaching this shelter from the storm before he fainted away, overcome by the loss of blood.

Meanwhile Sandy Joe struggled on his way, and by using the animal as far as it would go, and then leaving it in a snow drift while he continued on foot, finally reached the little camp to which he was bound. He told his tale of the great dangers he had endured, but without mentioning his companion, and received sympathy and attention from the miners.

The morning sun was just darting his straight beams from the eastern sky across the valley and into the interior of the mountain cave when Bob Dayton awoke from his sleep of exhaustion. The storm had cleared from the mountain, and as the shining rays were cast upon the interior wall of the cave, Bob, lying with his eyes just opened and too weak to feel a disposition to rise, noticed gleams of light where some bright substance reflected the sunlight. With difficulty he made his way on his hands and knees toward one of these points of light, and taking the glittering object in his hands, found, with trembling delight, that it was a bit of native wire silver, such as is found sometimes even on the surface over rich Colorado mines. On further examination he found rich indications of the same nature in various parts of the cave, and he was soon aware that he had made one of those discoveries which incite so many to seek their fortunes in mining grounds of the West, and that are really so frequent and exceptional. The ambition of his life was accomplished, and he might now, he felt, make a home as rich and pleasant as he had imagined to which to take the one he loved. But while in the first joy of his discovery he thus pleased himself with grateful images of the future, there came to him a new thought of his present situation, which had for the moment passed from his mind. "Alas," said he, "the willful fortune that kept from me the riches that I desired brings them to me now when life itself seems doubtful, and when I see no way to safety, weak as I am and far from any rescue. Must I die in the midst of this new-found wealth?" Just as he was occupied with these thoughts he heard a noise in a dark recess of the cave which he had not yet explored; and with a snort, some animal that had apparently been lying there, rose to its feet and came towards the light. For a moment Bob thought it might be one of the few wild beasts which are occasionally found in the mountains; but as the

animals advanced he saw to his joy that it was a roan-colored horse, such a one as he had heard had been lost from Cedar Gulch on these very mountains, and the very one to which Col. Brown had alluded when he talked to the loungers on the departure of the miners. Poor Bob's heart fairly leaped to his mouth at the hope of rescue presented by the appearance of the horse, who had apparently wandered into the cave to seek shelter from the storm and most opportunely presented itself.

Bob took up and put in his pocket a few specimens of the silver-bearing mineral about him, and leading the animal to the entrance of the cave, succeeded, after several efforts, in getting on its back. The feeling of a rider on its back brought the horse to its habit of subjection, and almost without direction it found its way back to the path, and down the side of Mount Shavano toward Cedar Gulch.

The horrors of that journey to the rider it would be hard to tell. His wound, from which the blood had ceased to flow, began to bleed again somewhat, and was with difficulty staunch. The weak man could scarcely retain his position on the horse's back, but with a brave determination and strong will he kept his seat while the sagacious animal descended the trail.

The evening had just set in when Bob tumbled fainting from the horse in front of the Grand Hotel. The rough but kind-hearted miners took him up and cared for him till by skill and patience he was again restored to strength. Sandy Joe, in the distant camp, heard of his victim's escape, and quickly departed from that part of the country, and was afterwards killed in a fight with a fellow-outlaw. Bob recovered from his wound, and before the winter snows had melted from the mountains he had staked out for himself a claim called "The Lizzie Claim," including the cave where that memorable night in his history was passed. He is counted a rich man in the possession of this mine, now famous for its mineral wealth, but he considers himself far richer in the love of the woman now his bride, and the two bright-eyed children growing up in the circle of his home.

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ORDER OF PUBLICATION. STATE OF MISSOURI, COUNTY OF PETTIS. In the Circuit Court of Pettis County, January Term, 1882. G. A. Eckery and Paul Wack, complainants vs. L. A. Bittinger and Charles Bittinger, defendants.

ORDER OF PUBLICATION. STATE OF MISSOURI, COUNTY OF PETTIS. In the Circuit Court of Pettis County, January Term, 1882. Margaret Bittinger, Plaintiff vs. Malinda Balliett, and Francis E. Balliett, her husband, George Andrews, Joseph Balliett, Adam Balliett, Amanda Cole, and Henry Cole, her husband, and Lydia Balliett, plaintiff vs. Jacob Balliett, Henry Balliett, Leonard Balliett, Mary Balliett, Elias Balliett, Hattie Staman, and her husband, John Staman, defendants.

NOTICE OF ASSIGNEE'S APPLICATION FOR DISCHARGE. In Re, W. R. Thomas & Co., Assignee for benefit of the undersigned assignee of the estate of W. R. Thomas & Co. will apply to the circuit court of Pettis county, Missouri, on the first day of the next term thereof, to be held and holden at the court house, in the city of Sedalia, in said county, on the first Monday in May, 1882, or as soon thereafter as counsel can be heard, for a discharge from the trust imposed by said assignment. 2-21-82 E. G. WILKES, Assignee.